

REMARKS

The present Amendment is filed in response to the Official Action mailed October 24, 2007, and is timely filed within the three-month shortened statutory window for filing a response. Based on the amendments and remarks made herein, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner reconsider her rejections and allow each of the pending claims.

Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. Each of the claims has been rejected. Briefly, the rejections are as follows:

1. A 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 1-7 and 14-21 over EP 1764593 to Benning et al ("Benning") in view of US D497,144 to Wilcox ("Wilcox").

2. A 35 U.S.C. §103(a) rejection of claims 8-13 over Benning and Wilcox in further view of US 5,302,026 to Phillips ("Phillips").

As listed in the originally filed documents, the present application is a 35 U.S.C. §371 national phase entry of International Application No. PCT/FR03/01808 filed June 13, 2003, which claims priority from French Application No. 02/07362 filed June 14, 2002. Accordingly, the present application should be afforded a priority date of June 14, 2002.

The present amendments add reference to this priority claim in the first paragraph of the specification. Moreover, Applicants have provided concurrently herewith verified translations of the two priority documents. It is firmly believed that the present invention is supported by the priority documents, and particular attention is drawn at least to Page 4, lines 4-7, of the French application.

In as much as the priority of the present application should be set at June 14, 2002, it is believed that neither the Benning nor Wilcox references are prior art. Specifically, the Benning reference claims priority to its original August 20,

2005 US filing, and is clearly not prior art against either the present application's June 14, 2002 French priority date or its June 13, 2003 International priority date. Similarly, the Wilcox reference's priority date is its US filing date of April 30, 2003. While this is prior to the present application's International priority date of June 13, 2003, it is after the French priority date of June 14, 2002. Based on these dates and the presently filed verified translations of the priority documents, it is believed to be improper for the Examiner to maintain any \$103 rejection set forth in the Official Action which relies on Benning or Wilcox. As that represents all of the rejections, it is firmly believed that the present claims are allowable over the art of record, and no discussion of the contents of the relied-upon art need be made.

As it is believed that all of the rejections set forth in the Official Action have been fully met, favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

If, however, for any reason the Examiner does not believe that such action can be taken at this time, it is respectfully requested that she telephone Applicants' attorney at (908) 654-5000 in order to overcome any additional objections which he might have.

If there are any additional charges in connection with this requested amendment, the Examiner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 12-1095 therefor.

Dated: January 24, 2008

Respectfully submitted,

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